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@From_Himalaya. Thread Link is as below

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Jai Maa durga bhadrakali

This thread is abt Durga Puja's celebrated in old families of Bengal. However partition of India wiped out lots of hindu legacies. Many families went pauper due to partition & tradition was lost(note -lack of central assistance). Some families managed to continue their tradition.

Will try to include them here. First puja is from Sylhet, Bangladesh. 1. Location :- District - Moulvibazar ; Sub-district - Rajnagar ; village - Panchagaon. About 300 years ago Sarbananda das of this family used to work in Sibsagar, Assam. Once during Ashtami tithi he went +

to Kamakhya Shaktipeeth. There he did puja of a 5 year old young girl as Kumari. During Puja he saw the girls skin color changing into red. He took this as a divine sign. Legend is devi himself told him that she will continue to live in his home. Sarbananda decided to start puja from next year. It was decided that colour of pratima will be red as he saw in Kamakhya Shaktipeeth. But, priests in the village objected due to the ''unusual'' colour of Ma. Relatives too boycotted the Puja. He failed to find any priest. However, the puja got completed due to +

the assistance of his Kulaguru. After partition of India zamindari system was abolished & that impacted the Puja. Also, continuous hindu persecution also affected Puja. But

still the Puja went on. During 1971 war all ornaments of devi was stolen. A huge amount of ornament indeed. The man who stole it became mad. In 1971 there was no Puja due to political instability there was no Puja. A man however completed ghat pujan. After that year, from 1972 local people organize this puja by collecting subscription. From 1972 the Puja has only got bigger. Thousands of people from all over BD attend this puja. Even ministers attend this Puja, it's a huge affair. There's a permanent shiva temple, durga mandap, nat mandir, bhog shala, room for keeping flowers, yajna kund and a pond. According to tradition 6 buffalos and hundreds of goats are sacrificed for during the Puja. There are many incidents concerning Ma because of which she is so popular throughout whole BD.

Due to lack of space I couldn't write it here. Jai Ma

2. Location :- India, District - Howrah, Shibpur. Puja of Roychowdhury family. This puja started around 1685 by Rmabramha Roychowdhury(Mukhopadhyay). He moved here at 1682-83 from North 24 Pargana. +
However, according to the old members of the family the Puja is more than 500 years old. Rambramha babu started this puja after Ma in his dream told him to start the puja. According to the tradition Chandipath starts during Krishna Navami.
According to Udbodhon sankhya 100. Rambramha babu's daughter used to play with a girl named "Padma" of her age. Hearing from his daughter abt her friend he went to

meet her but discovered that there's no girl named "Padma" lives in his neighbourhood. +

That night he saw Ma in his dream. Anyway, this puja is unique due to few reasons. This puja never kept any relation with "white master's". This family was fiercely nationalistic. There's a bael tree in the backyard of their home. They even have a room for the tree.Because they+

believe that Ma enters their home through this tree. They used to sacrifice 108 goats during Puja which has now stopped but still they continue to sacrifice 1 goat in Saptami, 2 goats in Ashtami. In Navami they sacrifice a goat in Byatai Chandika temple. During the days of puja + Durga pratima wears the crown of Ma Chandika. The Chandipath continues from Krishna Navami to Shukla Navami tithi. They offer meat of sacrifice to Ma with fish, sweet, rice, khichdi, 12 types of fries and curry.

Jai Ma

3. Location :- Barisha, Kolkata. Puja of famous Saborna Roychowdhury family.

Those who don't know about Saborno Roychowdhury's, they were the owner from whom East India Company acquired 3 villages named Sutanuti, Gobindapur and kalikata which later formed Kolkata. Their family has branched out since then and extended families celebrate their own Puja's.
There are total eight families celebrating Durga Puja now. The main Puja is called Atchala Puja. This Puja was started by Lakshmi Kanta Gangopadhyay in 1610.

Sabarna Barta is the annual tabloid published by Sabarna Sangrahashala during Durga pujo which highlights the new research works and activities undertaken by the Sabarna Roy Choudhury Paribar Parishad. Articles on various topics are also included in the four page tabloid.
Durga pujas are done through "Durgabhaktitarangini" system composed by Vidyapati. All the eight Durga Pratima are being created almost in the same manner. The uniqueness of the Pratima is that it has Chaalchitras divided into three parts +
and have pictures of the the ten different images of Ma Shakti known as the Dasamahabidya.

On one side of the Pratima there sits an idol of Shiva and on the other side its Rama. They are also being worshipped. The colour of the Durga is reddish or it can be of light golden as mentioned in theDurgabhaktitarangini.

The worshipping of the main frame where the Pratima stands or Kathamo Puja as we bengalis call it starts at Janmastami and in Radhashtami soils of 1008 tirtha's are put on the structure. For Atchala Puja bodhan starts at Krishna Navami. Other families starts at Maha Shashti.
The tradition of sacrificing 13 goats through Shasthi, Saptami and Ashtami and 1 Buffalo has stopped. Other families have their own tradition. Nimta-Pathanpur family sacrifice a doll made of kheer during Sandhi puja during when they worship their kuladevi Bhuvaneshwari.

A special pujo called Mashabhaktaboli is offered Mahasthami and Mahanabami to the presiding powers of Trilok including the Yoginis and the Upadevatas, believing that they too have cooperated to perform the pujo successfully.
Birati family and Borobari conduct Kumari Puja on Navami which follows Vaishnav rituals. Ganesha is red in colour. Chalchitra contains Dashamahavidya who are also worshipped.
The tradition also includes serving burned lotte fish as bhog during Sandhi Puja. Also two types of specially prepared sweets named Saborno-pranmohini & sabarno dwidha-pranjali are offered to devi.

Jai Ma

4. Location :- Bishnupur Rajbari, Bishnupur. District - Bankura, State - West Bengal.
This Puja was started by king Jagat Malla (994-1107)AD. This is probably the oldest running Puja in WB. He lost his way to palace after he went to forest for hunting deer. During his expedition he saw a deer and in his zeal to capture it he lost his way in deep forest.
The hunting hawk which accompanied him saw a heron and went to attack it but hawk itself was chased by heron. He

heard an Oracle uttered in a female voice,

“This is the holy place where I exist. Shift your capital here. You will find a minuscule shape of my countenance once the soil here is dug up. And also set up a temple of mine here.”

“This is the holy place where I exist. Shift your capital here. You will find a minuscule shape of my countenance once the soil here is dug up. And also set up a temple of mine here.”

He shifted his capital from Pradyumnapur to Bonbishnupur. The small countenance that was found after digging soil was embedded in the clay idol of Ma Mrinmoyee(another name of goddess Durga). Jagat Malla started Puja at 997 AD.

According to the pundits and local historians the building of the capital town Bishnupur and the establishment of Maa Mrinmoyee Devi were done simultaneously. Ramkrishna Singha Dev, the 59th king of Mallabhum, who ruled from 1876 CE to 1885 CE, built the existing building-temple.

Durga Puja in the Bishnupur royal family is quite different from others. Maa Mrinmoyee Devi is worshipped for about twenty days. On the auspicious day of ‘Jitashtami’ with the worship of Jimutbahana the great festival starts. It continues upto Dwadashi of Devi paksha.

Three other goddess boro thakurani, Mejo thakurani, Choto thakurani are also worshipped with Ma Mrinmoyee Devi.All of them are painted on Patachitra, so they're also called Pateshwari.Mejo thakurani and Choto thakurani are

welcomed on the day of Maha Chaturthi and Maha Ashtami.
Mejo thakurani is also known as "Maitor thakuron".Barada Thakurani is welcomed with nine gun fires from special cannons on Krishna Navami before the Puja starts.
In Saptami nine forms of Devi's - Bramhani, Kalika, Raktadantika, Shoka harini, Kartiki, Shiba, Durga, Chamunda and Lakshmi are worshipped in Nabapatrika.
On the day of Maha Ashtami, the idol of Vishalakshi with eighteen hands, made of eight metals is worshipped. The time of Sandhi Puja indicating the transient point between Maha Ashtami and Maha Navami according to the almanac is determined by ‘Jalghardi’ (water watch).
The message of the water watch is delivered to the main cannoneer, who waits on the top of a hillock called Muchchar Pahar to fire the biggest cannon announcing the auspicious moment of Maha Ashtami.
The whole area adjacent to the Maa Mrinnmoyee Devi temple and its surrounding poses a tremendous look as thousands of people from in and around Bishnupur assemble to witness the firing of the holy cannons releasing huge flames of red and yellow colours.
According to legend during that auspicious hour of ‘Sandhi Puja’ an all-pervading voice of “Ma” is heard in the air.
In erstwhile Mallabhum now Bishnupur and its surrounding areas, the booming sounds of the cannons are still followed to commence ‘Sandhi Puja’.
On the auspicious day of Navami, Kachchar Vahini (the

goddess riding on mule) is worshipped. This incarnation of Devi Durga is considered dreadful. A deep silence reigns supreme in the temple precinct as the entry of the commoners in the temple is then strictly prohibited. According to the legend, Malla raj Hambir saw her in his fort. After that incident the king started her Puja in durgotsov.

On the day of Dashami, a holy ‘Hom’ (offering into the holy fire) is arranged. Then the three Navapatikas of three Thakuranis (Barda Thakurano, Meja Thakurani and Choto Thakurani) that were invoked are immersed.

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In the evening of Dashami, Nilkantha bird is shown before Maa Mrinmoyee Devi followed by the members of the royal family. On that evening both Aparajita and Rama are worshipped in devi mandira. In Dashami a Indrajit idol, in ekadashi an idol of Ravana and in dwadashi a kumbhakarna idol all of them are made of clay are destroyed. There’s a popular saying: " Malle ra/ Shikhare pa Sakshat dekhbi Jodi Nada Shantipur ja." That means in Mallabhum the voice of Devi Durga is heard; in Shikhar in Purulia district the footprints of Devi are explicit on vermillion and in Shantipur in Nadia district Devi manifests supernaturally.

Mrinmoyee Mandir

Durga Puja at Bishnupur Rajbari

5. Bhattacharya family of Dighirpar village, Canning, South 24 Parganas. Bhattacharya family is organizing Durga Puja for more than 430 years(1585 CE to be precise). They were originally inhabitants of Bainkhara village, Bikrampur(Dhaka). Partition made them shift to 24 Parganas

But, I'm sure you are wondering why Maa Durga looks like that ? Original home of Bhattacharya's at Bikrampur used to have a Manasa temple. It was a family temple(many affluent Bengali families had family temple then). Daily Puja of Maa Manasa used to take place there.

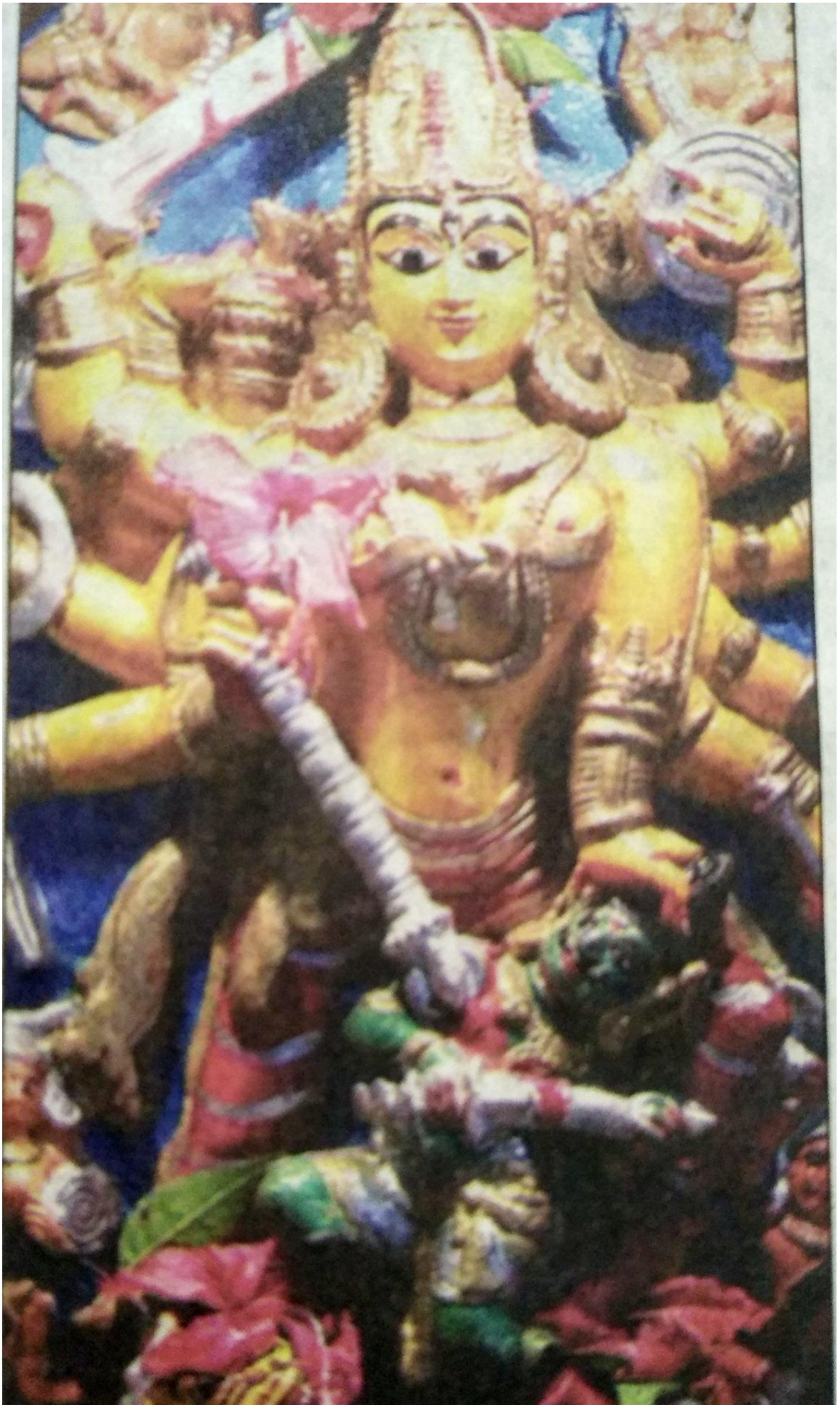
Everything went well for a long time, but about two hundred years ago a morning of MahaSaptami brought misery for the family. The priest was going towards the Puja mandap after completing his daily Puja in Manasa temple. But suddenly a crow took a candle wick and

dropped it...on the roof of the puja mandap. The roof of the temporary mandap was made of starw. Fire spread quickly and burned down everything including pratima's face. Family members decided to stop Puja then and there. But, family head Ramakanta bhattacharya saw Maa in a dream that night. Maa told him to continue with Puja but with black face. Since then bhattacharya's are continuing with this unique pratima(they are not alone, there are another family who organizes puja with this type of pratima. Will write abt them later).

After partition economic condition has worsened. Family members are in abroad, so the old glamour is missing. But, that doesn't stop them from adhering to all rituals. Their Puja preparation starts from "Kathamo Puja" at Janmastami. Pal family of Basanti who are also...

originally from East Bengal, is making her Pratima for the last 434 years. This puja attracts many people from nearby areas too. Many miraculous incidents too have taken place during Puja according to the family members .

6. Haldar family of Bagbazar, Kolkata. Haldar family home have this vigraha of Maa Durga with them for a longtime. So, for them it is not an annual occasion rather it's a daily event. She's their Griha Devata !



Haldar family originally from Chandannagar (Hooghly) used to travel to Baleashwar/Balasore(Odisha) every year for recreational purpose. In such a trip member of this family had a dream. Maa told him where she is and how to find her. Do you know where he found her ?
Fourteen feet under soil in a muslim fisherman's home ! Ever since she is being worshipped by Haldar's here. The vigraha is two feet tall. There's a murti of Mahakal atop of Maa Durga & both Jaya and Bijaya are present here on the both side of her. Left feet is on the top...
of Mahish & right feet on the top of lion. On the day of Maha Panchami they light a lamp which continues to burn for the next five days. On Sashthi the vigraha is turned towards south, based on the belief that Devi has come down to earth from Kailash from northwards.
On Saptami everyone from family must attend Naba-Patrika Snan at Ganga. Everyone including women of the family must attend it.

Vaishnav rituals are followed during Puja which means no fish bhog. The rituals regarding bhog are very strict. Slightest amount of deviation from rule will result in abandonment of all foods and one has to start from the beginning.

However womenfolks of the family has to take fish before continue with their duties on the day of Shasthi(which is an exception with West Bengali hindu families). Males of the family perform all Puja works of Ashtami tithi. After Kumari Puja ends they hv to take Kumari to a vaishnav Matha. This is the 448th year of this puja

7. Bhattacharya family of Beleghata, Kolkata.
Bhattacharya's of beleghata are originally from from district Sthalbasantapur, Pabna, Bangladesh. Before coming to Pabna they used to live in Nadia. They had to relocate to Asansol after partition, later Durgapur, Salt lake...
now it's Beleghata. Durga Puja in their family is continuing for the 287 years. Here too black murti of Maa Durga is worshipped by bhattacharya's. However unlike Canning Bhattacharya's no accident took place in this family.

Before Haridev Bhattacharya started Durga puja, they used organize Kali puja & it was going on for a long time. One night Maa Durga came Haridev's dream and told him to worship her in this form. But, Haridev couldn't believe it & even after meeting many scholars his mind...
remained unchanged. However, one meeting with a monk at Kashi convinced him of worshipping Maa Durga in this form. Bhattacharya family follows Kalika Puran. Here's a picture of old Kalika Purana Manuscript(in Bengali script) of Bhattacharya family.

Due to lack of space they have stopped animal sacrifice but otherwise all rituals are followed rigorously here. Another important tradition is that they use Sapta Sindhu water in Man's Puja. Family members personally collect water from seven rivers. Jai Maa

It's impossible to note down all traditional Puja's of Bengal here. There's a very short list of 41 such Puja's from Howrah district alone ! I'll mention one from there.
8. Dutta Chowdhury family of Andul, Howrah. Dutta Chowdhury's are Kayastha's of Southern Rarh. They hv a great family lineage which they trace back to Sena Period. One of the descendents came to then Muzaffarpur pargana(current Andul) on boat on late 1300s &... after cleaning jungles started living here. Later when Nityananda Prabhu came here then ruling scion Krishnanada left zamindari after receiving Sanyas from him. He eventually established a monastery at Odisha.

Before leaving his village he told his subjects to call the... village as "Anandadhuli" as it has been filled with bliss since Nityananda Prabhu has set foot here. "Anandadhuli" became "Andul". Founder of the famous Dutta family of Hatkhola was a member of this family. Actor Basanta Chowdhury, Writer Akshay chowdhury was member of this...
family. Writer Sukumari Debi chowdhurani too got in this family. Krishnanda's grandson Ramsharan started Durga puja on 1568 CE. Since then it's going on. Like many old families of Bengal, here too Puja starts from Krishna Navami and continues untill Maha Navami of Devi paksha.

Unmarried women of the family wears conch shell(a mark of married bengali hindu women) in these 12 days. "Kalo-Pradip arati" during Mahastami is an unique ritual of this family. Also, they worship two Kumaris here. Rituals are performed according to Brihat Nandikeshwar Purana

Jibe Goja from Puri is a must for Man's Anna bhog here. Anna bhog consists of Khichuri & Polao. Also they offer a special sweet to Maa (only family members are privy to the receipe).
This is the traditional Tana-Chouri Chalachitra of Bengal. Mahadev murti above durga, Jaya above lakshmi & Bijaya above Saraswati. Chitra of Ananta Vishnu above Durga, chitra of devi Jagadhatri above devi lakshmi and chitra of devi Dakshnia Kalika above devi Saraswati. Jai Ma

9. Sarkar family of Radhanagar village, Kumargram, (Alipurduar). Sarkar family originally belonged to Simheshwar village of Mymensingh(Bangladesh). Their ancestor started the puja there 405 years ago.

After partition they moved to Assam & after sometime they moved into Alipurduar at 1955. For the next three years they didn't have a home, so they had to perform puja in a Ghata. After that they constructed their home & family temple again.

"Kathamo Puja" starts at Rath yatra. Bhog:- Shasthi(cream/দুধের সর) Saptami(curd/chana/ছানা) Ashtami(kheer/ক্ষীর) Aforementioned families have stopped animal sacrifice due to various reasons, instead they use rice cake/pumpkin etc. Here it is continues however.
They sacrifice pigeon & goat on Saptami, Ashtami & Navami. On Ashtami according to tradition they sacrifice two goats. Meat is distributed among devotees as Mahaprasad(except Ashtami one). One practice they stopped after partitoon is firing in the air on Dashami. Bisarjan takes place on the family pond

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সংবাদদাতা, আলিপুরদুয়ার: আলিপুরদুয়ার জেলার কুমারগ্রাম ব্লকের ভল্কা-বারোবিশা গ্রাম পঞ্চায়েতের রাধানগর গ্রামের সরকার বাড়ির দুর্গাপুজো এবার ৬৩ বছরে পড়ল। পরিবারটি পূর্ববঙ্গে থাকাকালীন দুর্গাপুজো শুরু করেছিল। সরকার পরিবারের দাবি, ওই হিসেবে এবার তাঁদের পুজো ৪০৪ বছরে পড়ল। সরকার বাড়িতে এখন পুজোর জোরদার প্রস্তুতি চলছে। নিষ্ঠা ও ঐতিহ্য মেনে সরকার বাড়ির মন্দিরে রথযাত্রার দিন কাঠামোপুজো হয়েছে। রীতি মেনে একচালার প্রতিমা বানানোর কাজ চলছে।

গত ২৬ বছর ধরে সরকার বাড়ির দুর্গাপ্রতিমা বানিয়ে আসছেন গ্রামেরই শিল্পী বলাই পাল। অসমের গোসাইগাঁওয়ের পুরোহিত জ্যোতিষ চক্রবর্তী বংশপরম্পরায় এখানে পুজো করে আসছেন। এখানে বৈষ্ণব, শাক্ত ও শৈব মতে পুজো করা হয়। সপ্তমী, অষ্টমী ও নবমী এই তিনদিন পাঁঠা ও পায়রা বলি দেওয়া হয়। তবে ঐতিহ্য মেনে অষ্টমীর দিন জোড়া পাঁঠা বলির নিয়ম আজও রয়েছে।

পরিবারটি সূত্রে জানা গিয়েছে, ৪০৪ বছর আগে বাংলাদেশের ময়মনসিং জেলার সিংহেশ্বর গ্রামে থাকাকালীন সূর্য নারায়ণ সরকার পুজোর সূচনা করেছিলেন। দেশভাগের পরপরই পরিবারটি অসমে চলে যায়। সেখানে কিছুদিন থাকার পর পরিবারটি আলিপুরদুয়ার জেলার কুমারগ্রাম ব্লকে আসে। ওই সময় থেকেই পাকাপাকিভাবে পরিবারটি রাধানগরে থাকতে শুরু করে।

সাত পুরুষের সরকার পরিবারে এখন দুর্গাপুজোর দায়িত্বে রয়েছেন সুকুমাররঞ্জন সরকার এবং তাঁর ভাই মৃণালকান্তি সরকার। তাঁরা বলেন, পুরনো নীতি মেনে ষষ্ঠীর দিন দুর্গার সঙ্গে শিবের পুজো করা হয়। সপ্তমীর দিন দুধের সর, অষ্টমীতে ছানা এবং নবমীতে উমাকে ক্ষীর দিয়ে ভোগ দেওয়া হয়। দশমীর দিন বাড়ির পুকুরেই প্রতিমা বিসর্জন দেওয়া হয়। বাংলাদেশে থাকাকালীন প্রতিমা নিরঞ্জনের পর বাড়ির কর্তা শূন্যে গুলি ছুঁড়তেন। তবে এখন সেই প্রথা বন্ধ হয়ে গিয়েছে।

সুকুমারবাবু বলেন, অসম থেকে কুমারগ্রামের আসার পর আমাদের থাকার জন্য ঘর ছিল না। মন্দিরও ছিল না। তাই বাংলার ১৩৬২-১৩৬৫ সাল তিন বছর ঘট বসিয়ে পুজো করা হয়েছিল। ১৩৬৫ সালে মন্দির বানানোর পর থেকে ধুমধাম করে দুর্গাপুজো শুরু করা হয়। বলি দেওয়া পাঁঠা প্রসাদ হিসেবে ভক্তদের মধ্যে বিতরণ করা হয়। তবে অষ্টমীর পুজোর দিন সন্ধিপুজোর পর বলি দেওয়া পাঁঠা মাটিতেই পুঁতে রাখা হয়।

07th October, 2018

কুমারগ্রামে ভস্মীভূত ৯টি দোকান, পুলিস কর্মীদের সহায়তায় প্রাণে বাঁচল কিশোর

সংবাদদাতা, আলিপুরদুয়ার: শনিবার ভোররাতে অসম-বাংলা সীমান্ত কুমারগ্রামের বারোবিশার সেলস ট্যাক্স অফিস মোড়ে অগ্নিকাণ্ডে ন'টি দোকান ভস্মীভূত হয়ে যায়। একটি টায়ারের দোকানে শুয়ে থাকা ১৪ বছরের এক কিশোর অল্পের জন্য প্রাণে বেঁচে যায়।

বিশদ

10. Sengupta family of Siddha village, East Medinipur. The puja started more than three hundred years ago when the family head Sri Bharat Chandra Sengupta had a dream. He was told to construct a Devi murti with the kalas he will find in his family pond.

আদ্যা

Next day he did found four such kalas. He followed the instructions perfectly. Since then Devi is worshipped everyday. She is called devi Siddeshwari. Khichuri, polao, curry, fish etc are offered to Maa as bhog. Seven types of fishes on Saptami, eight type of dishes on Ashtami

আদ্যা শক্তি

Nine types of dishes on Navami are offered to Maa as bhog. On Dashami Pantabhat & Shakbhaja are must on Naividya. Buffalo sacrifice has stopped, instead they offer goat sacrifice now. This puja is a very famous one in Medinipur. Their Ras utsav is a very big one too.

11. Dayamoyi Durga Mandir, 14 Sitaram Das street - Kolkata. The Vigraha was discovered by Jitu Ghosal. He dug it up from Jagannath ghat. He got the direction in a dream where he was instructed to go the Jagannath ghat and dug up the vigraha.

Dayamoyi temple is situated on the site of his home. His neighbor, the dutta family is taking care of the temple for the last three generations. They take 1850 as the year when the temple was established based on the writing on the wall of the temple.

Here devi is alone. The vigraha is made of stone, anga raga happens every year. Instead of lion here vahana is a sea-horse(?), like we see in dhakeshwari Durga. It's impossible to carry the murti for even seven or eight people but...

Jitu Ghosal carried her alone from Jagannath ghat to his

home. Maa told him that she will become "light" . Visit time :- (7 Am - 11 Am) & (6 Pm - 9 Pm).

13. Chattopadhyay family of Garui Village, Asansol. The Puja is 700 years old. Preparation starts after Jitastami.

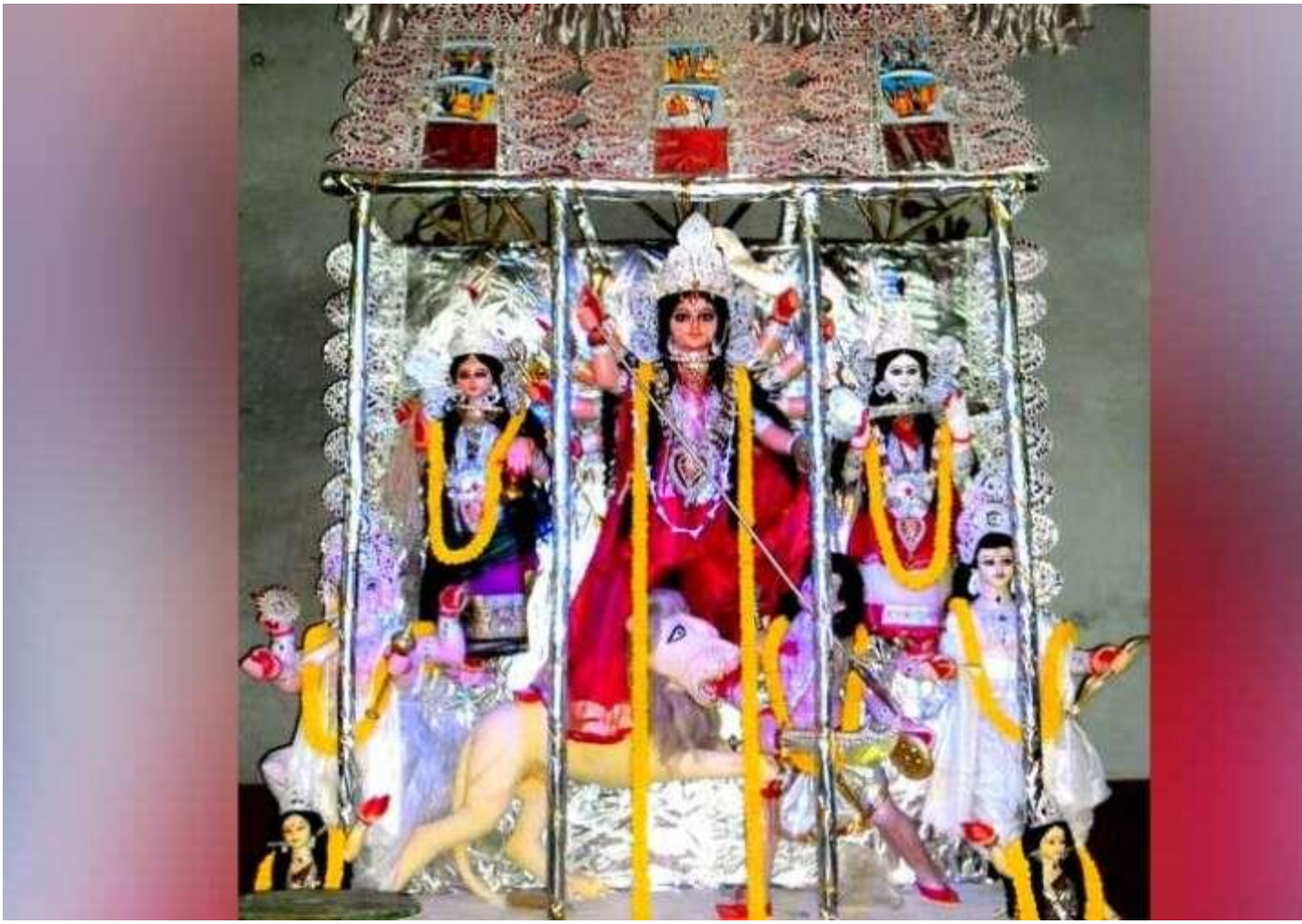
Bodhan takes place at Krishna Navami like many old families of Bengal. Now the puja takes place in the Durga temple, which was constructed about three hundred... years ago. Goat sacrifice takes place at Maha Saptami & Sandhi puja. Few minutes after the sandhi puja a flower from Pratima's hand drops in the ground. People take that moment as an indication. It repeats every year. After that animal sacrifice takes place.

14. Mitra family of Janai, Hooghly. Here too Bodhan starts from Krishna Navami. Another tradition is the pratistha of the Ghata of the Mangal Chandi in the thakur dalan(the place where puja takes place). Family deity Raghunathjeu also remains present when rituals take place.

Everyday after puja ends Raghunathjeu returns to the family temple. On the morning of the Maha Saptami devi takes bath in the sea water. Another unique ritual of this family. Animal sacrifice still continues here. Puja rituals follow strict shakta doctrine.

Eyes of Raghunathjeu remains covered when sacrifice takes place. Sacrifice of seven goats and one sheep takes place in Maha Saptami, Ashtami(Sandhi puja) & Maha Navami. Also fish too is a part of Devi's Naividya.
Before bisarjan Devi visits Raghunathjeu in his temple. After that everyone takes Maa to the river. After bisarjan everyone visits Raghunathjeu & writes "Sri Sri Durga Mata

Sahay" !



15. KatheSabari Durga of Mazumder family. Katwa, Bardhaman. Very very old Puja(about 850 years old). About seven hundred years ago an attack took place(guess who attacked) when puja was going on. But they couldn't find Devi murti ! Devi herself hidden herself...

in the temple wall. Villagers came to know about this from Devi's instruction. She told them that they will find her inside the temple wall. And they did find her after digging the temple wall. In the local language of Rarh wall made of

soil is known as "Kanth".

Since then Devi is known as Kantheswari. Here you will find only Jaya & Bijaya. Puja takes place in Shakta mata. Goat sacrifice continues even though Buffalo sacrifice has stopped. Daily Puja of devi is performed throughout the year.

16. Malla family of Kuchiakol, Bankura. Like many traditional families of Rarh vanga, they do puja of a Durga painting(we call them পট in Bengali). That's how durga puja is being done here for the last four hundred years. Here they worship Maa Durga is vaishnav mata. Thus no animal sacrifice takes place. Fruit, sweet, milk these are naividyas except at Dashami when fish(চ্যাং মাছ) with panta bhat is offered to Maa. Like Bishnupur royals they use their cannon to commence Sandhi puja.
The tradition is to keep their griha devata Radha-Vinod with Maa Durga for these four days. No bisarjan of the

"Durga Pot" takes place here. Puja of RamaChandra takes place at Dashami, that too is an unique tradition of this family.

17. Mazumdar family of Khagra, Baharampur(Murshidabad). Mazumder family trace their origin to Birbhum where they used to celebrate Durga Puja every year. When Bargi's were razing Birbhum their ancestor Sadananda had to flee the place. Locality of Khagra was full of jungle then.
Baharampur itself was established at 1765. Sadananda however never stopped his puja. In Birbhum he used to make pratima by his own hand. In Murshidabad too he made pratima and continued puja. In that jungle, just think abt it !
In 1769 the pious queen of Natore, Rani Bhabani was returning from Kolkata to Baranagar. She heard sound of the bell & became happy. Then she ordered her men to look for the source of the sound. Aftee they came back with news she was told that today is Durga Shasthi... that's why someone is performing durga puja here. As soon heard it, queen aborted her plan of reaching Baranagar that day and decided to spend the night there in the jungle ! Later she donated many utensils for puja.

Like old families of Bengal, this family too follows

Prathama Kalpa, it means Bodhan happens at Krishna Navami. They follow Kalika Puran thus animal sacrifice too takes place in MahaSaptami, Sandhi puja & MahaNavami.

Also, if someone wants to offer goat to Maa then more animal sacrifice takes place. This puja has devotees spread across whole district. Many incidents hv also taken place.

Jai Maa

18. Pet-Kati Durga of Bandyopadhyay family, Godaipur(Jangipur, Murshidabad). This four hundred year old puja has become a legend of it's own. People come here to visit Maa even from neighboring districts !
No artisan of Jangipur dares to start sculpting pratimas until work on this pratima starts. There's a pond in the back of the family temple of Bandyopadhyay family. According to the popular belief diseases gets cured if one takes a dip there & then offers Puja to the Goddess.

Puja starts at Krishna Navami. Animal sacrifice(goat, sheep, Buffalo) takes place at Sandhi puja. The reason Devi is known as Pet Kati Durga because once she shallowed a girl who was later recovered only after a goat sacrifice on Maha Ashtami.
Traditional boat race takes place in the Jangipur ghat after

people brings pratima there on Dashami. Then traditional boat race take place on Dashami. No pratima in Jangipur goes for bisarjan until bisarjan of pet kati durga ends at Ekadashi.

After bisarjan her Ghata is taken back to the family temple of Bandyopadhyay family where they will perform nitya puja until next year.

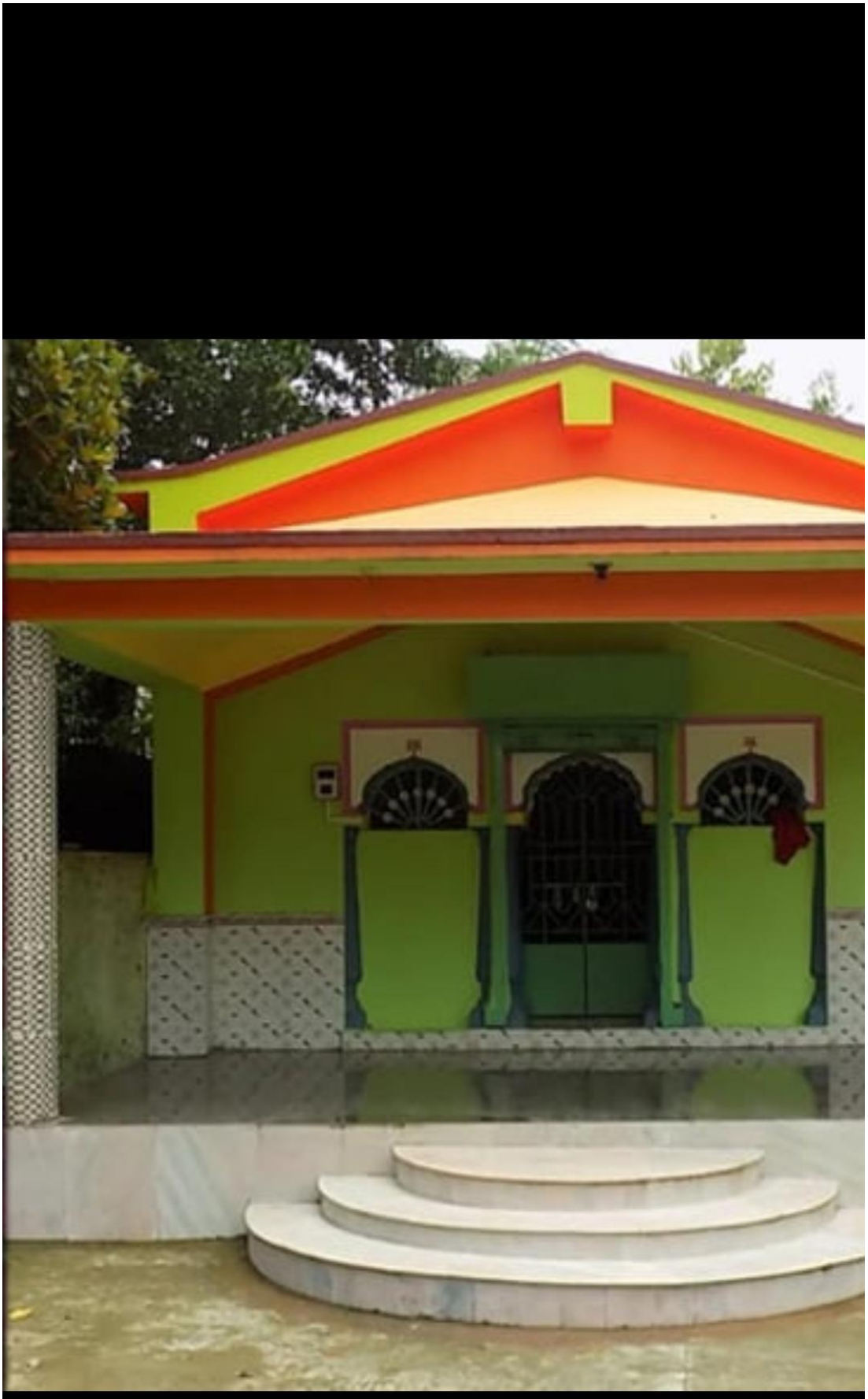
19. Chattopadhyay family of Sitalgram, Nalhati, Birbhum. Their Puja started 317 years ago. The area was full of jungle then. Their ancestor attained Siddhi on the Panchamundi Asana. He started durga puja after receiving a dream from Maa.

Chattopadhyay family follows Bhadrakali Kalpa, which is pretty rare in Bengal. Their Puja starts with a goat sacrifice on Pratipada. Four more sacrifice takes place on the MahaShasthi, MahaSaptami, MahaAshtami, MahaNavami. After that they walk around the village with...
the bloody sacrificial sword. It's tradition. There are six more Puja's in the village which starts after chattopadhyay starts their puja.

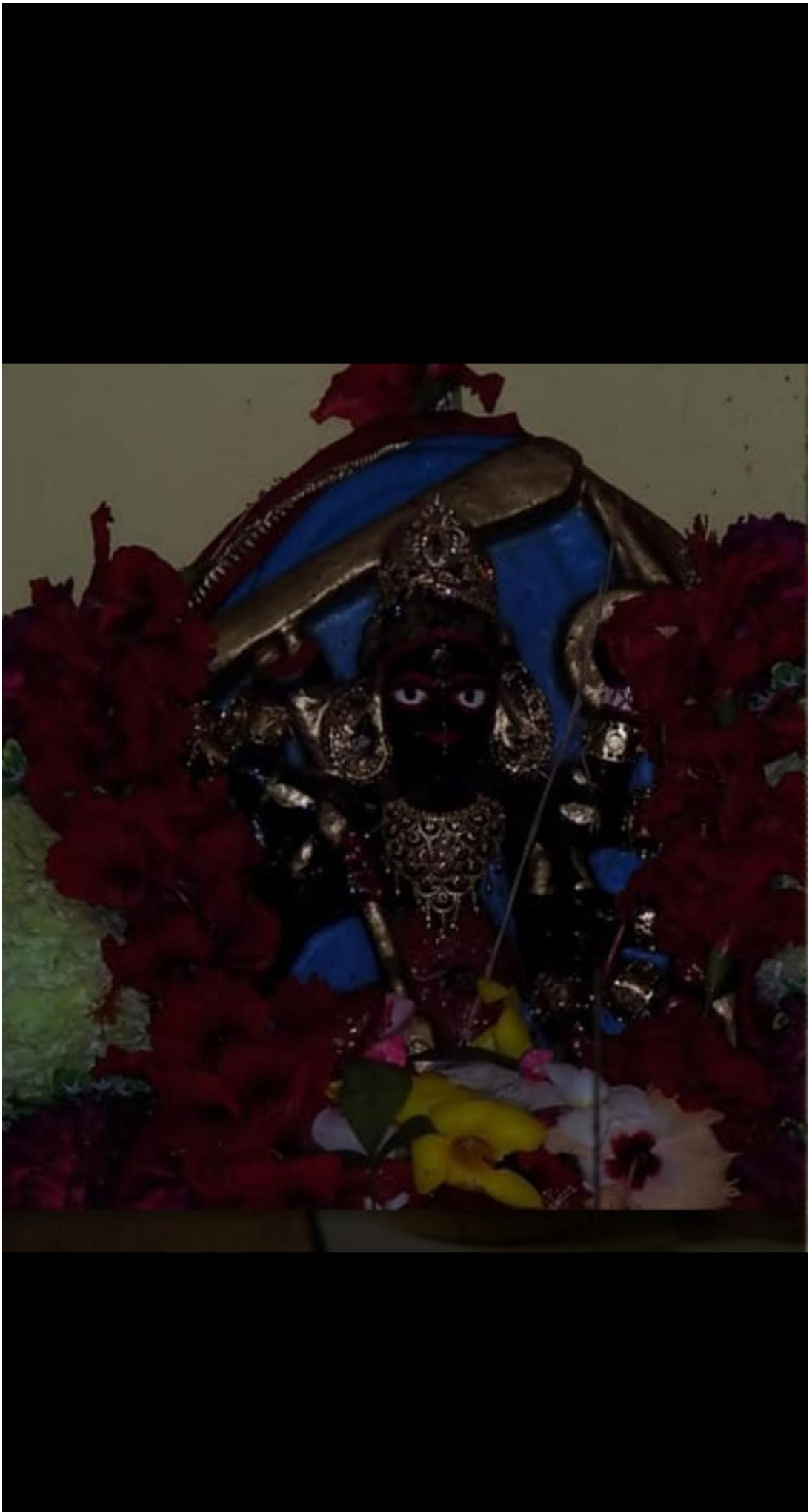
20. Sibakhya Devi of Amaragarh, Bardhaman. Longtime ago a King from Surat came to Bengal for pilgrimage purpose. He brought his pregnant queen with him. In the road they entered a jungle where queen gave birth to a child. They tried to wake her up but failed.

Thinking she is dead they left her with the child. Next day a local Bramhin was passing through the same area. He heard the cry of a child. After he reached the area, he saw that a mother bear is trying to calm the child. Seeing him the bear fled leaving the child.

Bramhin brought him to his house and named him Bhallupad. Later the child became undisputed king of the area. His great grandson took a Devi vigraha from a landlord of Katwa. That is Devi Sibakhya. According to locals Bhallupad used to exist seven hundred years ago. But we don't know for sure. Anyway, the palace is long gone. But descendents remain. Because this is a vigraha nitya puja takes place throughout the year. Villagers have constructed a temple too.



Puja starts from Prathama Kalpa(which tell us that the puja is ancient, no doubt abt that) and animal sacrifice takes place at MahaNavami. But at another temple. This is the puja of whole village now.

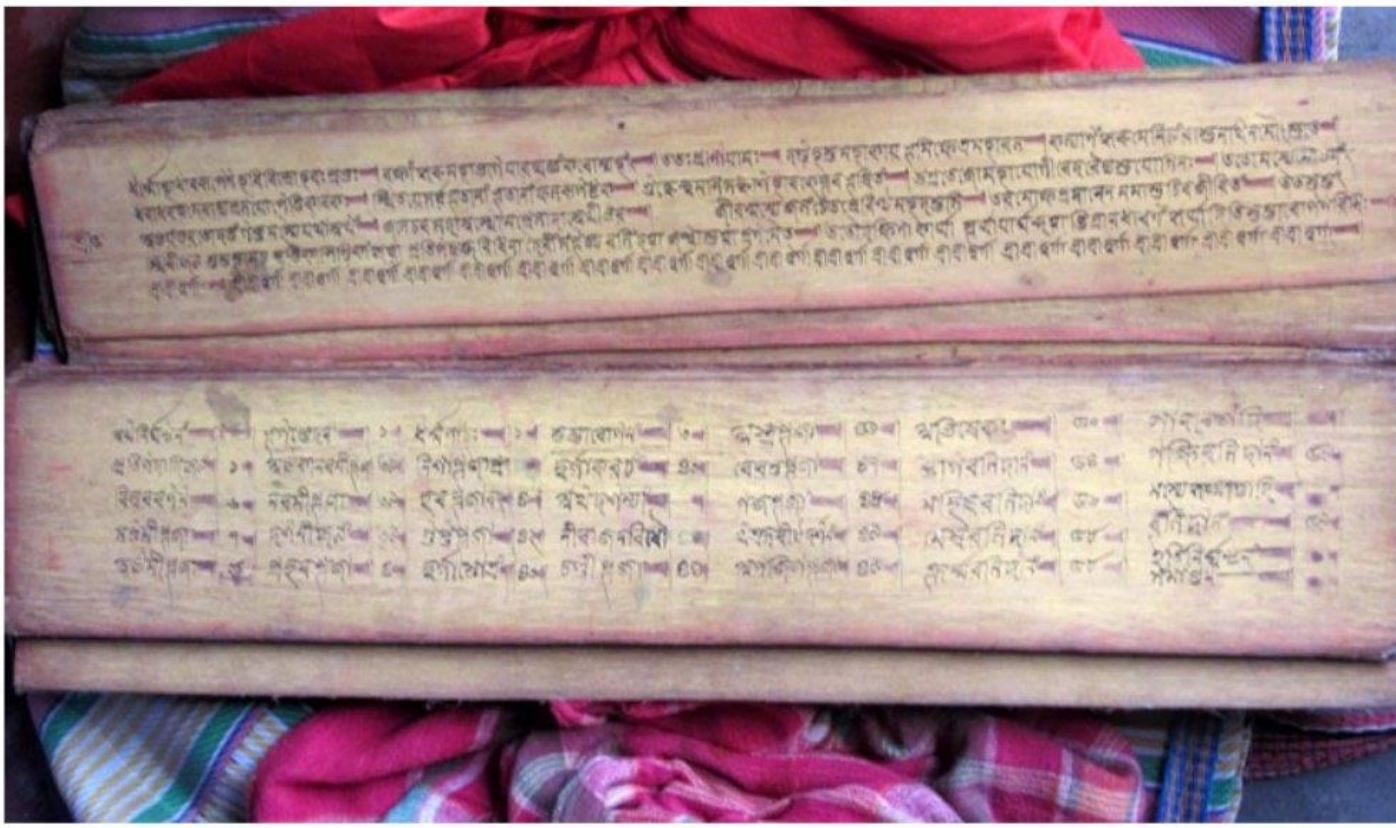


21. Chanak village, Mangalkot(Bardhaman). More than three hundred years ago a Tantra sadhak, Anandamoy Deb(Bhattacharya) attained Siddhi here. Soon after he saw a white snake near his asana. That night Devi came in his dream and told him to start puja at the exact same place.

Now there's a temple there. However puja starts only ghata is brought here. Animal sacrifice takes place at MahaAshtami.

22. Bhattacharya family, Coochbihar Puja started in the Bhattacharya family 353 years ago in their ancestral house at Ulipur(Rangpur, Bangladesh). Though they had shifted

to Coochbihar long time before partition and puja too shifted with them to Coochbihar then.



Puja in bhattacharya family starts from Pratipada, i.e Bhadrakali Kalpa. Here puja takes place in the shakta mata. So, Animal(goat) sacrifice takes place in MahaSaptami, MahaAshtami and MahaNavami.

Infact they sacrifice two goats in MahaNavami, one of which must be white in colour. They also offer

sol(snakehead murrel) and boal(helicopter catfish) fish with khichuri as bhog in their naividyas to Maa.
23. Shankari Maa, Khandaghosh(Bardhaman) More than five hundred years ago Raghav dutta discovered this vigraha of Durga from a pond after receiving a dream from Devi herself. He constructed a temple and placed Maa there. Since then Durga puja is taking place in this village. Also, nitya puja takes place eveeyday at the temple. Every year animal sacrifice takes place only after offered flowers to maa during Sandhi puja falls into ground(this happens every year). People here take it as the sign of Maa giving go-ahead for the sacrifice to take place.

24. Ghosh family, Rameshwarpur, Hasnabad This year puja will step into 578 years. Here Durga is Uma, daughter of the family who has come to her father's house for four days. Thus no animal sacrifice takes place, only fruits instead.
Till this day women of the family don't take bath in the Dashami because daughter is leaving her house and won't rerurn for a year. This puja is famous in the area, there are incidents of people getting cured of their illness after offering puja to Maa.
People believe that every desire gets fulfilled if someone offers puja to Maa thus this puja sees no shortage of crowd in this four days.

25. Simha-Ray family, Haripal, Hooghly Devi Dwarika-Chandi of Simha-Ray family is said to be alive. About three hundred years ago an ancestor of theirs discovered it from a jungle after receiving directions in his dream. The Vigraha said to have belonged to Sena era.
Unfortunately about hundred years ago their family temple and the vigraha got destroyed in natural calamities. Since then nitya puja & Durga puja is continuing on ghata. However few years ago members of this family have decided to sculpt Devi's murti again.
During Durga puja here Chandipath takes place for first nine days shukla paksha. Animal sacrifice takes place on Snadhi puja and MahaNavami. For villagers Maa Dwarika-Chandi is above all, she is protecting them from each and every danger, calamity there is.

26. Dubrajpur and Mayureshwar, Birbhum Ray family and Chattopadhyay family of Balijuri village, Dubrajpur start their Durga Puja from prathama kalpa. In Chattopadhyay family first animal sacrifice takes place today.
After that three more goats will be sacrificed in MahaShasthi, after Sandhi puja on MahaAshtami and on MahaNavami. Their preparation starts from the day of Nil puja.

Puja begins from prathama kalpa at two Ray families of Dakshingram and Roychowdhury and Bandyopadhyay's of N'para of Mayureshwar from the Prathama kalpa too.
27. Sadhu family, Magra(Hooghly). Where Maa Durga protected people from anarchy unlished during Bargi raids in Bengal. He worshipped Abhaya Chandika rupa mentioned in Chandi-Mangal. Looting stopped after puja began here. Maa appeared as a protector thus no lion & asura here.

বর্গী হানা থেকে রক্ষা পেতে অভয়া রূপে পূজিত হন দুর্গা

অভিজিৎ চৌধুরী • চুঁচুড়া

বাংলায় তখন বর্গী হানার কাল। ১৭৪২-এর সেই ভয়াবহ সময়ে দখল হয়ে গিয়েছে তদানীন্তন বর্ধমানের হুগলি। বর্গী তালুক তখন শিশ রায়ের দখলে। বর্গীদের দাপটের কাছে মাথা নত করে গুণাগার দিতে হয়েছে মুর্শিদাবাদের জগৎ শেঠকেও। এই অরাজক বর্গী হানা থেকে নিজে এবং প্রজাদের বাঁচাতে আলিবর্দী খাঁ'র জায়গিরদার শুরু করেছিলেন দুর্গাপুজো। তাৎপর্যপূর্ণভাবে সেই দুর্গা দশপ্রহরণধারিণী বা শাকম্ভরী ছিল না, ছিল অভয়াদুর্গা। শত্রুহন্তা নন, বরদা অভয়প্রদায়িণী সেই মূর্তিই গত ২৭০ বছরের বেশি সময় ধরে হুগলির মগরা ব্লকের হালুসাই পাটনা'র সাধু পরিবারে পূজিত হয়ে আসছে।

জায়গিরদার ভগবানচন্দ্র সাধু'র হাতে শুরু হওয়া সেই পুজো ইতিহাসের এক খণ্ডাংশকে যেমন ধরে রেখেছে, তেমনি বাংলার সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতির জনজীবনে প্রভাবের একটি পরিচায়কও বটে। বর্তমান হুগলি বা তদানীন্তন বর্ধমানের দামুন্যার মুকুন্দরাম চক্রবর্তী ততদিনে কবিকঙ্কন। লিখে ফেলেছেন অভয়ামঙ্গল কাব্য। সেই কাব্যেই ধনপতি সওদাগর ও তার ছেলে শ্রীপতিকে উদ্ধার করেছিলেন দেবী অভয়াচণ্ডী। ফলত, বিপদকালে হালুসাই পাটনা'র জায়গিরদার ভগবানচন্দ্রও দেবীর সেই রূপেরই আরাধনায় ব্রতী হয়েছিলেন। সেই সঙ্গে এলাকায় বর্ধিষ্ণু বেনে বা ব্যবসায়ী সম্প্রদায়ের বাস ছিল। সেটিও দেবীর মৃণ্ময়ী রূপের নির্ধারক হয়েছিল।

পাকা পিচ রাস্তা অধ্যুষিত একবিংশ শতকে এক টুকরো ইতিহাস এখনও থমকে আছে হালুসাই পাটনায়। প্রাচীন সোঁদা গন্ধ মাখা মন্দির চত্বরে স্বমহিমায় তার বসত। প্রাচীন চারবাংলা আদলের মন্দিরের একাংশে সময়ের প্রয়োজনে সিমেন্টের পোঁচ দিতে হয়েছে। কিন্তু অন্যত্র এখনও বর্গী হানার কালের চুন, সুরকির শিল্পীত বিন্যাস। এই মন্দিরের গত ২৭৮ বছর ধরে দেবীর পুজো হয়ে চলেছে।

অভয়াদুর্গা দ্বিভুজা। তিনি কমলেকামিনী বেশে দর্শন দিয়েছিলেন তাই প্রতিমাতেও তিনি পদ্মারূঢ়া। তিনি অভয়া তাই সিংহবাহিনী নন। নেই অসুরও। তবে দেবী দুর্গার পুজো চিরন্তন পারিবারিক সত্তাকে সূচিত করে। নাবাবি কাল থেকেই সাধুদের পুজোয় একচালার অভয়া দুর্গার সঙ্গে তাঁর সন্তানরাও পূজিত হয়ে আসছে। জনশ্রুতি যে, জায়গিরদার ভগবান সাধু পুজো শুরু করার পরে বাংলা থেকে বর্গীর দাপট অন্তর্হিত না হলেও হালুসাই পাটনাতে বড় রকমের লুঠতরাজ বন্ধ হয়ে গিয়েছিল। আজ, কালের নিয়মে ঠাঁটবাট অস্তমিত হলেও

মগরার সাধু পরিবার

পুজোর আয়োজনে ঘাটতি নেই। এখনও সাধুদের পুজোয় পাত পেড়ে ভোগ খাওয়ার চল আছে। একদা তোপধ্বনি দিয়ে পুজো শুরু হতো আর লাঠিয়াল বাহিনী মন্দির ঘিরে থাকত। এখন প্রাচীন মন্দিরে তোপধ্বনির স্থান নিয়েছে ঢাকের বাদ্যি, লাঠিয়ালের বদলে আছে গ্রামের জন কোলাহল। সাধু পরিবারের ৭০ পেরনো উত্তরপুরুষ কৃষ্ণচন্দ্র সাধু বলেন, দেবী অভয়ার কল্যাণে বর্গীর হানা থেকে অনেকটাই বেঁচেছিল হালুসাই পাটনা। পারিবারিক ঐতিহ্য এবং দেবীর কৃপার কথা স্মরণ করে আমরা আজও রীতি মেনে পুজো করে চলেছি।

নেদারল্যান্ডসের প্যালেসে ২০

28. Maa Simha-Bahini of Dey-mallick family, Kolkata. I've promised earlier that I will start this year puja series with her. Now, let me tell you about how Kula devi of Rayvardhana deva(elder brother of Harshavardhan) ended up in Kolkata.

413 years ago the patriarch of Dey-maalick family visited Dhaka for business purpose. They used to live at Saptagram(Hooghly) then. He came to learn about the deity being worshipped at Chattagram in a dream where

Devi appeared before him. He was told visit the place...

Devi was being worshipped in a cave by a priest. Baidyanath mallick came to know that she was taken from Rajasthan to this cave in Chattagram so Mlecchas can't touch her. Baidyanath was a staunch devotee of devi, he wanted to take her to his home at Saptagram but... the priest refused. That night Devi appeared in priest's dream & told him to handover her vigraha to Baidyanath. She was taken to Hooghly. About 130 years later Mallicks moved to Kolkata to save them from Bargi attack. Devi too moved to Kolkata with them.
Other than nitya puja, Devi is worshipped on Basanta Navratri, Sharada Navratri and Jagadhatri puja. Thakur Ramkrishna went into samadhi as soon as her saw her. There are many famous tales regarding Devi. Once family priest of Dey-mallick opposed animal sacrifice on puja... That night he began to cough blood. Blood didn't stop until they decided to restore the animal sacrifice ritual. Two heirs of family tried to stop her puja to animal sacrifice, that night both were infected with cholera & died soon after that.
Another time a man tried to steal devi vigraha. He became blind instantly from the jyoti which came out from Devi's eye. Five time each & every day bhoga has to be offered to her. Anna-bhoga is forbidden so they offer luchi-fry etc.

Btw, Dey's are descendants of Rayvardhana .

29. Bhagavāti of Ray family, Harmasra Village, Bankura - Harmasra is an old Baidya majority village of Southern Bankura & Durga puna(worshipped here as Bhagavāti with Shiva) of Ray family is famous here. Their ancestor started the 282 years ago after devI appeared in his dream.

However, their puja isn't limited to four days of Ashwin Shukla Paksha. Devi Bhagavāti is their Kula devi too (picture of family temple given below). They worship a separate pratima during Durga puja. They follow Katyayani Kalpa.
They worship a separate pratima during Durga puja. They follow Katyayani Kalpa.

Being practicing Vaishnavas, Ray family uses pumpkin &

sugarcane as sacrifices instead of an animal. Fruits, sweets, beaten rice etc. are given as bhoga. But, on dashami they offer fish. Why ?
Devi Durga is seen as the daughter of family here & according to our custom daughter must take fish before she leaves her father's house for her husband's home :)

30. Durga puja of Banik family Tollyganj/Chattagram :-
Banik family hv been conducting Durga puja at their ancestral place Dewanpur, Chattagram for more than 300 year. Puja didn't stop even after some family members left for India after 1947, but it had to be stopped on 1992.

In such scenario before they have performed ghaTa puja, but this time they couldn't do that either. When the bad news reached from Kolkata from Chattagram, Shri Swapan Chandra Banik at Tollyganj, Kolkata decided to start puja at his home with only 10 days remaining before puja.
He managed to save the family tradition by organizing

Durga puja at his home, "Visnuchhaya Durga bari" that year. Ever since then puja is taking place at Sirity, Tollyganj. Family follows Katyayani kalpa & & worships devi a traditional Ekchala Durga murti as per tradition.

Like all old families, they too follow some age old customs - • New Benarasi saree for Maa every year & gifts that saree to some woman who will get married soon. • Sarees of Nabapatrika are to be worn as prasad by the women of family. • About bhogas - •

After Mahalaya non-veg are not to be eaten & they offer niramish anna-bhoga. Khichuri, Polao, bhaja, labra, chatni, payes, mishti. On evening - luchi, suji, mishti. 1.25 kg chini(sugar) & different kinds of naru are must everyday. But, pair of Ilish is a must on Dashami bhoga.

Ilish mach bhaja(Hilsa fry), taro stem & Katla mach bhaja

with Panta bhaat on Dashami bhoga is a family tradition. Following family tradition they don't perform bisarjan of Durga ghaTa. They bring water for Kojagari lakSmI pUjA on that ghaTa & performs bisarjan after lakSmI pUjA
They also bring back nitya pujita devatAs of the family to thakur ghar - Radhamadhav, Ma lakshmi & Gopinath.
Dewanpur puja re-started after few years & now Durga puja takes place at both Kolkata & Chattagram family line. It's more than 350 years old now.

PS - The Ganesha is always placed at the left side of Ma Durga according to EB tradition. But, WB tradition which follows Krishnanagar Rajbari always places Ganesha on the right side of Devi. They had to buy ready-made pratima 1st year, since then they follow Nadia tradition.

31. Ghosh family, Kuldanga Village, Howrah :- Centuries old Durga puja of Kuldanga Ghosh family starts from Pratipada. They follow Bhadrakali/Madhyama Kalpa. Same priest(from a respected Agamvagisha family) is performing puja for generations, they follow shakta parampara here

Same family of Potters are sculpting pratima for generations. They worship Hara-Gauri with their four children, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartikeya & Ganesha...

Women are not allowed to cook, arrange, ready bhoga of Ma Durga(they can participate & offer puja to Ma Durga). Only male members of the family can do that according to the family tradition and they have been arranging that from the beginning. Total naivedya, 21 mon = 777 kg.

Village people can offer naivedya to Ma Durga, they have the permission. On Mahastami thousands of women from seven neighbor villages participate in Dhuno porano ritual after offering puspanjali here.

There's another ritual of feeding sweets to Gauri(she's seen as a daughter who is leaving her fathers home until next year).

The pond where the bisarjan takes place belongs to Ma Durga. It's registered in her name. No-one takes bath there, washes cloth or catches fish there. In past who-ever tried to catch fish there became ill. In past people have seen her there too.